SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Southern California Region:

- ***Accommodating growth – half of California's anticipated new residents will reside in the semi-arid Southern California region.***
- ***Securing adequate supplies of high quality water to achieve economic potential in the region and state.***
- ***Working to ensure continued water supply reliability and improved water quality through investment in local sources of water and innovative technology and approaches.***

Innovative Partnerships

Southern California uses integrated planning to manage diverse water resources including imported water from the Delta, Colorado River, and the Eastern Sierra, local groundwater supplies, recycled water, conserved water, and desalinated brackish water.

Stakeholders representing environmental, water, wastewater, flood control, watershed, wetlands, agricultural, environmental justice, business, and community interests are successfully collaborating in regional water supply and watershed planning and coordination efforts. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, and Southern California Water Dialogue are among the groups facilitating this collaboration.

Regional Priorities and Issues

The Southern California region is planning and implementing multiple projects to assure a sustainable water supply for the future. These projects will increase the region's water supply options to meet the needs of the growing region. Regional goals include:

- Producing drinking water supplies that meet or exceed increasingly stringent state and federal standards.
- Maximizing use of groundwater basins by expanding storage, conjunctive use, and groundwater cleanup programs.
- Expediting water use efficiency projects including conservation, reclamation, and water management programs.
- Expanding watershed partnerships, developing watershed management plans, and developing integrated solutions to restore ecosystems and manage polluted storm water run off.
- Developing mutually beneficial water transfer or water exchange programs.
- Reducing organic carbon and bromide levels in imported water.
- Reducing salinity levels in imported water the overall salt balance of the region.
- Initiating ocean water desalination test projects.
- Using infrastructure enhancements to complement imported water supplies.

Statewide Benefits

Most projects and programs implemented in Southern California benefit the Delta by giving the region the flexibility to reduce dependence on the Delta during critical periods. These efforts include:

- Increasing storage capacity through conjunctive use reduces demand on the Delta. Southern California produces an average 1.3 million-acre feet of groundwater per year. During droughts, groundwater production can increase by approximately 500,000 acre-feet.
- Increasing water conservation and recycling projects.
- Achieving the annual use of approximately 500,000 acre-feet of recycled water (this includes the Orange County Water District reuse of the Santa Ana River), 100,000 acre-feet of desalinated brackish groundwater, and the conservation of 480,000 acre-feet.
- Developing new treatment technology and water quality exchanges to improve Southern California drinking water quality of both imported and groundwater.
- Investing and managing for healthy watersheds that can improve Southern California water quality and provide other local water management benefits.
- Developing and funding desalination technology to help continue supply reliability through diversified resource supplies.

Regional Accomplishments

Water Supply Reliability

- Partnerships forged for groundwater planning with local agencies in six areas.
- $133.7 million invested in 44 local projects to improve groundwater management and expand groundwater storage in Southern California basins, with a potential water supply yield of more than 126,200 acre-feet annually.
- Water conservation is reducing demand in the region. The Family of Southern California Water Agencies (MWD member agencies and other regional partners) has launched a far-reaching program to promote water efficient landscaping and irrigation.
- $440 million in local, state and federal funds invested in water recycling programs that will recycle more than 408,000 acre-feet of water a year.
- Water supply reliability improved through the Environmental Water Account.
- Local water supplies augmented through water transfers facilitated by CALFED agencies.
- More than $3 million invested in aquifer supply reclamation projects in San Bernardino County.
- $5 million invested in recycled water distribution (Inland Empire Utilities Agency) and recycled water studies (San Diego County Water Authority).

Water Quality

- More than $8 million invested in 6 projects, including the development of a Southern California regional drinking water quality management plan.
- Water quality improvements supported in terminal Southern California reservoirs and in groundwater replenishment projects.
- Funding provided for Desalination Research and Innovation Partnership (DRIP). The project already has resulted in development of advanced reverse osmosis membranes.

Ecosystem Restoration and Watershed Management

- More than $4 million provided in funds for 9 projects in Southern California to develop watershed management plans, perform monitoring and provide outreach and education with emphasis on improving water supply reliability and decreasing dependence on water imported from the Bay-Delta.
- Funding for 8 watershed coordinators provided to assist with community-based management efforts within the region.